IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 3, line 17 as follows:

Briefly, according to the present invention, an electric bending endoscope comprises a bending portion arranged to an inserting portion, a bending driving unit and a buffering member. The bending driving unit bends the bending portion, and includes a motor, a first unit and a second unit. The motor generates driving force for bending the bending portion. The first unit holds the motor. The second unit includes a driving force transmitting member. The buffering member connects the first unit to an outer member of the inserting portion, a connecting ~~code~~ cord and a switch. The buffering member absorbs external force generated during the operation of the electric bending endoscope.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 13 as follows:

The electric bending endoscope 2 is continuously arranged to a base end of the inserting portion 6 and comprises an operating portion 7 which commonly functions as a grip portion 7a (refer to Fig. 10). The electric bending endoscope 2 has a soft universal ~~code~~ cord 80 extended from a side portion at the operating portion 7.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 19 as follows:

A light guide or various signal cables (which are not shown) are inserted in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80. A connector portion (not shown) is arranged to an end portion of the universal ~~code~~ cord 80. Connecting cables from the light source device and the video processor (not shown) and a connecting cable from the bending control device 100 are connected detachably to the universal ~~code~~ cord 80.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 8 as follows:

Further, a specific description is given of the electric bending endoscope 2. A light guide 21 for transmitting the illumination light is inserted in the inserting portion 6 in the electric bending endoscope 2. The light guide 21 reaches the connector portion of the universal ~~eode~~ cord 80 via the operating portion 7 from the base end side so as to transmit the illumination light from a light source lamp (not shown) arranged in the light source device. The illumination light transmitted from the light guide 21 illuminates a subject such as an affected part of the body from an edge surface of an illumination window (not shown) fixed to the edge portion 11 of the inserting portion via an illumination optical system 22.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 21 as follows:

An illuminated subject image, namely, a subject image is captured from an observation window (not shown) arranged adjacently to the illumination window. The captured subject image is picked up by an image pick-up device 24 such as a CCD (Charge-Coupled Device) via an objective optical system 23 and is photoelectrically converted into an image pick-up signal. The image pick-up signal is transmitted via a signal cable 24a extending from the image pick-up device 24, reaches the video connector of the universal ~~eode~~ cord 80 via the operating portion 7, and is outputted to the video processor (not shown) via the connecting cable. The video processor processes the image pick-up signal from the image pick-up device 24 in the electric bending endoscope 2, generates a standard video signal, and displays the endoscope image on a monitor.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 11 as follows:

A signal line 32a is extended from the motor 32 in the gear box 3. The motor 32 in the gear box 3 receives a motor driving signal from a motor amplifier 34 arranged to the bending control device 100 via the signal line 32a in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80. The motor amplifier 34 is connected to the control portion 35 and is controlled by the control portion 35.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 18 as follows:

The motor 32 comprises an encoder 36 which detects a rotating position as means for detecting the rotating position. A signal line 36a extending from the encoder 36 in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is connected to the control portion 35. The encoder 36 outputs to the control portion 35, a rotating position signal indicating the detected rotating position of the motor 32.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 12, line 25 as follows:

The sprocket 31 in the bending and stretch mechanism portion 4 converts the rotation of the motor 32 into advancing and returning motion of the chain 26A. A potentiometer 37 for detecting the rotating position as the means for detecting the rotating position is connected to the sprocket 31. A signal line 37a extending from the potentiometer 37 in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is connected to the control portion 35. Thus, the potentiometer 37 outputs to the control portion 35, a rotating position signal indicating the detected rotating position of the sprocket 31.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 10 as follows:

Reference numeral 38 denotes a switch for detecting a clutch operation and detects whether the clutch 33 is ON or OFF. A signal line 38a extending from the switch 38

for detecting the clutch operation in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is connected to the control portion 35. Consequently, the switch 38 for detecting the clutch operation outputs to the control portion 35, a clutch operation signal indicating the detected operation of the clutch 33.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 18 as follows:

As mentioned above, the bending operation input portion 20 such as the joystick or the track ball is arranged to the grip portion 7a of the operating portion 7 in the electric bending endoscope 2. The signal line 20a extending from the bending operation input portion 20 in the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is connected to the control portion 35. As a result, the bending operation input portion 20 outputs to the control portion 35, a bending operation signal indicating the inputted bending operation.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 19 as follows:

According to the second embodiment, unlike the first embodiment, holding means for holding the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 arranged in the operating portion 7 is fixed to the inner gear frame 19 of the gear box 3.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 23 as follows:

Specifically, referring to Fig. 8, the outer gear frame 9 of the gear box 3 is formed without the top surface and the bottom surface so that the inner gear frame 9 accommodated therein is exposed. Further, a stop tool 40 as holding means for holding the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is fixed to the inner gear frame 9 as the hard member, by using the screw 41.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 29, line 5 as follows:

In addition, referring to Fig. 8, the stop tool 40 comprises a ring-shaped holding portion 40A to which the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is fit by screwing a screw 42 and a fixing portion 40B which fixes the holding portion 40A to the inner gear frame 10 of the gear box 3 by at least three plate members or stick members.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 29, line 11 as follows:

The holding portion 40A has screw holes 40a and 40b at predetermined positions on the peripheral surface thereof. A connector 80A arranged to the edge portion of the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is fit and is held to the gear box 3 by screwing a screw 42 via a screw hole arranged to the connector 80A and the screw holes 40a and 40b.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 29, line 19 as follows:

Therefore, according to the second embodiment, the external force (surplus force) is forcedly applied to the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 during the operation. The universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is fixed and held to the inner gear frame 10 as the hard member of the gear box 3 by using the stop tool 40, thereby absorbing the external force (surplus force) via the universal ~~code~~ cord 80. Thus, the tolerance is remarkably improved and the engagement state (connecting state) is best held between the low-speed gear train 28 in the gear box 3 and the final gear 28 of the bending and stretch mechanism portion 4. Thus, the transmission loss of the driving force is reduced and the bending operation performance is preferably obtained. Other advantages are the same as those according to the first embodiment.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 8 as follows:

According to a modification of the second embodiment, the stop tool 40 as the holding means comprises the holding portion 40A into which the universal ~~code~~ cord 80 is fit, a fixing portion 40B which is made of at least two plate members or stick members extended from the holding portion 40A, and a connecting member 44 which connects the fixing portion 40B by screwing a screw (not shown) and which fixes the fixing portion 40 to the inner gear frame 10 in the gear box 3. Thus, the stop tool 40 as the holding means may fix and hold the universal ~~code~~ cord 80. In this case, the same advantages according to the first embodiment are obtained.